

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-01 INR-07
IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 NSC-05 /089 W
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FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2027

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INFO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BONN

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USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0110

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET REPS OF MARCH 10, 1977

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: ON MARCH 10, FOLLOWING NAC DECISION TO
AUTHORIZE TABLING OF DATA ON US FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA,
AND AFTER DISCUSSION IN AD HOC GROUP, US REP AND DEPREP MET
WITH SOVIET REPS TARASOV AND SHUSTOV TO INFORMALLY SOUND OUT
SOVIET REACTION. US REP SUGGESTED THAT THE DISCUSSION OF DATA
AND COUNTING RULES HAD DEVELOPED TO THE POINT WHERE IT WOULD
BE HELPED BY THE TABLING OF DATA ON US AND SOVIET FORCES IN THE
REDUCTION AREA. TARASOV SAID THE EAST WAS WILLING TO DISCUSS
DATA ON US AND SOVIET FORCES FIRST, BUT ONLY REPEAT ONLY IF
NATIONAL TOTALS FOR ALL DIRECT PARTICIPANTS ON BOTH SIDES WERE
TABLED AT THE SAME TIME. IN AN HOUR OF CLOSE ARGUMENT, US REP
STRONGLY PUT THE CASE FOR PUTTING DOWN US-SOVIET TOTALS,
BUT TARASOV DID NOT SHOW ANY GIVE. DURING GENERAL DISCUSSION

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OF COUNTING RULES, TARASOV DEVELOPED THE VIEW THAT ALLEGED
ERRORS IN WESTERN DATA ON EASTERN FORCES MUST ARISE FROM
RELIANCE ON AUTHORIZED OR TABLE OF ORGANIZATION STRENGTH RATHER
THAN INFORMATION ON NUMBERS OF PERSONNEL ACTUALLY IN THE AREA.
END SUMMARY.

2. US REP OPENED DISCUSSION. HE SAID HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE

USEFUL TO REVIEW THE PRESENT STATUS OF DISCUSSION ON DATA AND COUNTING RULES. EASTERN REPRESENTATIVES HAD QUESTIONED THE REASON FOR SOME OF THE WESTERN QUESTIONS ABOUT EASTERN DATA. THE SOLE PURPOSE OF THESE QUESTIONS WAS TO DETERMINE THE SOURCE OF THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN WESTERN AND EASTERN FIGURES ON EASTERN FORCES. WESTERN REPRESENTATIVES WERE NOT FISHING FOR INFORMATION NOT RELATED TO THIS QUESTION. WESTERN QUESTIONS ABOUT PERSONNEL EXCLUDED WERE A NECESSARY COMPLEMENT TO QUESTIONS ABOUT PERSONNEL INCLUDED. WESTERN REPS WERE NOT INTERESTED IN GOING INTO THE ISSUE OF PUBLIC SECURITY IN EASTERN EUROPE BUT WERE TRYING TO GET A COMPLETE PICTURE OF WHO HAD BEEN INCLUDED IN EASTERN DATA AND WHO WAS LEFT OUT. EVEN IF BOTH SIDES WERE USING LANGUAGE OF A SIMILAR NATURE TO DESCRIBE THEIR COUNTING RULES, THESE RULES COULD HAVE BEEN DIFFERENTLY APPLIED.

3. TARASOV SAID THE EAST WOULD ANSWER THESE WESTERN QUESTIONS ON EXCLUSIONS, BUT IT WAS FAIR TO SAY THAT DISCUSSION THREATENED TO DRAG OUT INDEFINITELY IF CONDUCTED AT ITS PRESENT PACE. TARASOV THEN SAID THE EAST WAS CONVINCED THAT WESTERN DATA ON EASTERN FORCES WAS INCORRECT. HE COULD SEE PROBABLE REASONS WHY WESTERN REPRESENTATIVES AND GOVERNMENTS WOULD NOT WISH TO ADMIT THIS POINT, REASONS HAVING TO DO WITH PUBLIC OPINION, THE SIZE OF MILITARY BUDGETS, AND SO ON, BUT IT WAS NONETHELESS A FACT. ONE COULD NOT GET MORE OUT OF A JAR THEN HAD BEEN POURED INTO IT, AND EASTERN FIGURES WERE COMPLETE. THERE MIGHT BE DIVERGENCES AS REGARDS A FEW THOUSAND MEN HERE OR THERE. BUT THERE WAS NO WAY THAT THE EAST COULD HAVE HIDDEN OR DISPOSED OF 150,000 QUOTE DEAD SOULS UNQUOTE.

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4. US REP SAID HE WISHED TO EMPHASIZE THAT WESTERN DATA USED IN THE VIENNA TALKS HAD NOT BEEN ARTIFICALLY COMPILED TO SUBSTANTIATE THE WESTERN REDUCTION APPROACH IN THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS. IT WAS THE SAME DATA USED BY WESTERN AUTHORITIES IN THE NORMAL COURSE OF THEIR BUSINESS.

5. TARASOV SAID HE THOUGHT THE PROBLEM MIGHT LIE IN THE WESTERN COUNTING METHOD. AS FAR AS HE COULD SEE, IN THEORY, THERE WERE THREE POSSIBLE COUNTING METHODS WHICH MIGHT BE USED: (A) TALLING THE TABLES OF ORGANIZATION STRENGTHS. (B) THE ROSTER STRENGTH METHOD BASED ON TALLING STRENGTH REPORTS FROM EACH INDIVIDUAL UNIT BASED ON THE TOTAL OF MANPOWER EACH HAD ON ITS ROSTERS WHO WERE ACTUALLY THERE OR ASSIGNED TO THE UNIT BUT TEMPORARILY ABSENT. THIS METHOD GAVE A PRECISE COUNT. (C) THE ACTUAL STRENGTH METHOD. AS FAR AS HE COULD SEE, THE WESTERN ACTUAL STRENGTH METHOD AS APPLIED TO EASTERN FORCES WAS A COMBINATION OF ANALYSIS BASED ON TYPICAL TABLES OF ORGANIZATION PLUS SOME NECESSARILY FRAGMENTARY INFORMATION ON INDIVIDUAL

UNITS. BUT HE WISHED TO STATE THAT NO WARSAW TREATY UNIT IN THE REDUCTION AREA WAS AT A STANDARD STRENGTH. EACH WAS AT A PARTICULAR INDIVIDUAL STRENGTH AND THERE WAS NO WAY IN WHICH THE WEST COULD KNOW THIS INFORMATION.

6. US REP SAID WESTERN INFORMATION WAS BUILT UP ON A LIST OF THE ACTUAL EASTERN UNITS IN THE AREA. INFORMATION HAD BEEN ASSEMBLED ABOUT THE STRENGTH OF EACH OF THESE UNITS. HE DID NOT PROPOSE TO DISCUSS THE SOURCES OF THIS INFORMATION BUT IT WAS FAIR TO SAY THAT IT WAS SIMILAR TO THE PROCESS TARASOV HAD DESCRIBED AS THE ROSTER METHOD. TARASOV EXPRESSED DOUBT AS TO WHETHER THE WEST HAD SUCH DETAILED INFORMATION. US REP REPEATED THAT HE WAS NOT IN A POSITION TO DISCUSS INDIVIDUAL ITEMS OF INFORMATION.

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FROM US REP MBFR

7. US REP SAID HE THOUGHT THE TIME HAD COME FOR THE DISCUSSION OF COUNTING RULES AND DATA TO BECOME MORE SPECIFIC. FOR THIS PURPOSE, WESTERN PARTICIPANTS WOULD BE WILLING TO TABLE DATA ON US GROUND AND AIR MANPOWER IN EXCHANGE FOR SIMILAR DATA ON SOVIET FORCES IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A BASIS FOR MORE DETAILED DISCUSSION. TARASOV SAID THE SOVIET POSITION ON THIS ISSUE WAS CLEAR: THE EAST HAD PROPOSED TABLING OF SEPARATE TOTALS FOR DIRECT PARTICIPANTS. THE SOVIET UNION WAS WILLING TO

BEGIN A COMPARISON OF DATA ON THE FORCES OF THE US AND THE USSR IN THE REDUCTION AREA WHEN, AND ONLY WHEN, ALL DIRECT PARTICIPANTS HAD PUT DOWN SEPARATE TOTALS FOR THEIR FORCES IN THE AREA. THIS PROPOSAL WAS A COMPROMISE IN THAT THE EAST WAS READY TO GO INTO DETAILED DISCUSSION OF US AND SOVIET DATA BEFORE THE DATA OF OTHER DIRECT PARTICIPANTS WAS EXAMINED. BUT TOTALS ON ALL MUST BE SUBMITTED TOGETHER.

8. US REP SAID THE PROGRAMS OF BOTH SIDES PROVIDED FOR US-
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SOVIET REDUCTIONS FIRST. IT WAS ONLY LOGICAL TO TABLE DATA ON THOSE FORCES. IF THE SOVIETS ADHERED TO EXTREME CONDITIONS, A LONG PROCEDURAL WRANGLE COULD OCCUR, DELAYING THE ENTIRE PROCESS OF DATA DISCUSSION. IT WOULD LOOK SILLY TO THE PARTICIPATING GOVERNMENTS IF NEGOTIATORS IN VIENNA COULD NOT EVEN AGREE ON THE SEQUENCE OF DATA DISCUSSION AND ON WHOSE DATA TO PUT DOWN FIRST.

9. TARASOV SAID, ON THE CONTRARY, THIS WAS NOT A SILLY PROCEDURAL ISSUE. THE REAL ISSUE INVOLVED WAS UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT WOULD BE PREPARED TO TABLE ITS SECRET DATA ON ITS FORCES IN AN INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATION. MOREOVER, TABLING DATA ON US AND SOVIET FORCES ALONE WOULD NOT SERVE TO SHOW HOW EACH SIDE HAD MADE ITS COUNT BY TOTALLING THE NATIONAL FORCES OF EACH SIDE. IT WOULD NOT ASSIST IN FINDING THE SOURCE OF THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN THE DATA OF EACH SIDE. TO FIND THE LOCATION OF THE DISCREPANCY, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO TABLE ALL NATIONAL TOTALS. FURTHERMORE, THE DISCREPANCY WAS NOT ONLY BETWEEN EASTERN AND WESTERN FIGURES ON WARSAW TREATY FORCES, BUT ALSO BETWEEN WESTERN AND EASTERN FIGURES ON WESTERN FORCES AND THE EAST WANTED TO ASCERTAIN THE REASONS FOR THIS DISCREPANCY TOO. THE WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND CANADA HAD SINCE THE OUTSET OF THE NEGOTIATIONS STEADFASTLY REFUSED TO UNDERTAKE A BINDING COMMITMENT ON THEIR REDUCTIONS. NOW THEY DID NOT EVEN WANT TO PUT DOWN THEIR DATA. EASTERN DATA ON SOVIET FORCES WOULD COVER A LARGER PORTION OF WARSAW TREATY FORCES THAN US DATA FOR NATO FORCES AND US REP'S SUGGESTION WOULD OMIT DATA ON THREE-QUARTERS OF NATO FORCES. IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT THE US REPS' SUGGESTIONS COULD AND WOULD RESULT IN A SITUATION WHERE THE US AND SOVIETS HAD TABLED THEIR DATA AND THE OTHER WESTERN PARTICIPANTS REFUSED TO FOLLOW SUIT. THE SOVIETS WERE NOT INTERESTED IN A REDUCTION AGREEMENT CONSISTING ONLY OF US-SOVIET REDUCTIONS WITHOUT ANY COMMITMENT FROM OTHER PARTICIPANTS. THIS WAS A MULTILATERAL NEGOTIATION IN WHICH ALL DIRECT PARTICIPANTS HAD TO REDUCE, NOT A BILATERAL ONE BETWEEN THE US AND THE SOVIET UNION. THE SOVIET UNION
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WAS NOT GOING TO TABLE DATA ON ITS FORCES AND HAVE OTHER WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS WHICH WERE UNWILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN REDUCTIONS OR TO TABLE THEIR DATA SIT IN JUDGMENT ON THAT DATA AND ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT IT.

10. US REP SAID NONE OF THESE ARGUMENTS MET HIS POINT. THE WEST WAS PREPARED TO PUT DOWN DATA ON US FORCES IF THE SOVIETS PUT DOWN DATA ON SOVIET FORCES. THIS WAS AN OBVIOUS NEXT STEP WHICH FIT IN THE PROGRAM OF BOTH SIDES. HE SAID HE WAS SURE IT WOULD HELP TO FIND THE SOURCE OF THE DISCREPANCY. IT WAS NOT PRACTICAL TO ARGUE AGAINST TAKING A STEP WHICH WAS INTRINSICALLY JUSTIFIED ON THE GROUNDS THAT MORE HAD TO BE DONE.

11. TARASOV SAID HE HAD DESCRIBED THE SOVIET POSITION AND THE REASONS FOR IT. HE BELIEVED THIS POSITION FULLY JUSTIFIED AND HE BELIEVED PUBLIC OPINION WOULD UNDERSTAND AND SUPPORT THE EASTERN VIEW ON THIS MATTER. US REPS AGAIN RAISED ARGUMENTS ABOVE IN FAVOR OF TABLING US AND SOVIET DATA. TARASOV REPEATED HIS ARGUMENTS ABOVE WITHOUT VARIATION AND WITH EMPHASIS.

12. TARASOV RAISED THE ISSUE OF WESTERN ARGUMENTS ON INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN EARLIER EASTERN POSITIONS AND PRESENT EASTERN DATA STATEMENTS. HE SAID THE WEST SHOULD REALIZE THAT MOST OF THE EASTERN ARGUMENTS THEY WERE CITING FROM THE YEARS 1973-1975 HAD BEEN MADE IN A PERIOD WHEN THE EAST STILL FIRMLY BELIEVED THAT IT WAS PREMATURE TO DISCUSS DATA BEFORE AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON REDUCTIONS IN PRINCIPLE. THEREFORE, EASTERN PARTICIPANTS HAD BEEN RESTRICTED IN THEIR COUNTERARGUMENTS TO NON-NUMERICAL ARGUMENTS WHICH WOULD NOT LEAD TO DATA EXCHANGE. CONTINUATION OF THIS DISCUSSION WOULD NOT LEAD ANYWHERE AND WOULD WASTE A LOT OF TIME.

13. US REPS SAID THERE WERE TWO TYPES OF FACTS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. ONE WAS THE WEST'S DATA, WHICH IT CONSIDERED WELL-FOUNDED AND THE SECOND, THE ACTUAL OBSERVED BEHAVIOR OF
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THE EASTERN PARTICIPANTS SINCE THE OUTSET OF THE TALKS. BOTH OF THESE BODIES OF EVIDENCE POINTED IN THE SAME DIRECTION, TO THE EXISTENCE OF A LARGE EASTERN SUPERIORITY IN MILITARY MANPOWER IN THE AREA.

14. THE PRECEDING REPORT HAS BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO THE AD HOC GROUP.RESOR

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